



Young Leadership Cares Supporter

We're Glowing from Holiday Giving

Over a thousand volunteer hours and hundreds of volunteers worked together to assure that Linkages families enjoyed a happy holiday season in 2004. More than 2,500 Linkages family members were served in November and December, with donations valued at over \$70,000.

At Dave and Busters, dozens of employees joined with their friends and family members to serve almost

600 meals donated by the restaurant, along with gifts and game time for the children. Gerald Collins, a Montgomery County Assistant State's Attorney, joined a fraternity brother working at Dave & Buster's as well as two other fraternity brothers, including a Baltimore police officer, and a D.C. teacher. "I'm happy to come out and assist," said Collins, noting he feels blessed to be able to give back to others. Like most of the volunteers, Collins was planning his own Thanksgiving celebration later that day.

Ilene Sparber, HHS representative to the Linkages Resource Team, considers many of the employees old friends, with many returning each year to host the event. Said Sparber, "It's great to see everyone each year. Even though it can be hectic, with our families arriving all at once, the staff handle it with graciousness, helping everyone feel welcomed. Our families are happy to be together, and we are thrilled to participate."

Other partners, whether large or small, make significant commitments to support Linkages' holiday efforts, coordinated with the Volunteer Center's Holiday Giving Coalition. Vivian Yao, Linkages nonprofit representative to Linkages Resource Team, coordinates use of a central database and works with staff to match donors with the needs of Linkages families.

"We couldn't do this without the total efforts of our many committed community partners," said Yao. "Whether an individual effort or a huge drive, each contributes tremendously to the well-being of our families, helping them stretch their very limited resources. Without expecting anything in return, our generous friends help our families to feel cared for and happy."

Training Reflections

Over 60 Linkages staff joined together for a day of training, team building and celebration on January 24, 2005 at Blair High School. Joellen Smallwood, faculty member at Hood College and former MCPS educator, led staff in a series of activities designed to build a greater awareness of Linkages' mission and how it drives their responsibilities in our multi-agency collaboration.

The morning started off with groups of case managers, mental health therapists, site coordinators and supervisors discussing their roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the program's mission. Then, individuals briefly responded to "conversation starters" that served to share personal and professional information.

A fun event closed the morning -- diverse groups were formed to write newspaper cover stories, including headlines, sidebars and quotes, providing a glimpse of what Linkages' might look like at some point in the future. Exciting successes were heralded in every issue!

Following a delicious "holiday" lunch, groups worked on their ideal Linkages staff person using large mural paper, feathers, yarn, fabric, colored paper and other materials. Creative, funny and very realistic caricatures were then exhibited to the entire group.

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L to R: Claudia Bernard, intern, Harmony Hills ES, Monica Martin, program manager, GUIDE Program Inc., and Michelle Blumenthal, site coordinator at Highland ES, share their mural.



Thanks to our Donors, Volunteers and Partners Helping with Drives:



<p>ABT Associates: food, food gift certificates and toys, Harmony Hills ES</p> <p>Academy Child Development Center at Darnestown Road and Academy CDC at Drew ES: toys, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Aidan Montessori School: toys and food, Rolling Terrace ES and Linkages-wide</p> <p>All Saints All Day Child Care Center at Chevy Chase Circle and All Saints All Day at Leland: toys, Linkages-wide</p> <p>American Speech-Language-Hearing Association: toys and gifts, Broad Acres ES and Maryvale ES,</p> <p>Argyle Middle School Staff: toys and gifts, Kennedy Cluster schools</p> <p>Aspen Hill Daycare Co-op: food, toys and gifts, Harmony Hills ES</p> <p>Bannockburn Nursery School: hats and gloves, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Bethesda Chevy Chase High School PTSA: toys and gifts, food and food gift certificates, Broad Acres ES, New Hampshire Estates ES and Oak View ES; coats: Linkages-wide</p> <p>Bethesda United Church of Christ: funding, food and mitten tree, Viers Mill ES</p> <p>Broad Acres First Grade Team: food, toys, clothing and books, Broad Acres ES</p> <p>Bethesda Elementary School PTA: coats, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Drew Carneal, Alison Creekmore, Jacob Gaffigan and Clare Green: school supplies, Harmony Hills ES</p> <p>Chevy Chase ES Community Service Club: toys, Rolling Terrace ES</p>	<p>Chevy Chase Elementary School PTA: coats, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Community Women's Club of Rockville: food, gift certificates and household items, Maryvale ES</p> <p>Congressional District Office of Rep. Chris Van Hollen: toys and gifts, Linkages-wide</p> <p>DHHS Abused Persons Program: toys gifts and food, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Farmland Elementary School: food, coats and toys, Harmony Hills ES</p> <p>Garrett Park Elementary School: food, hats and mittens, Viers Mill ES</p>	<p>Hearts and Hands (with the Volunteer Center's Holiday Giving Coalition & Toys for Tots): toys, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Hope Worldwide: toys and gifts, Greencastle ES and Banneker MS</p> <p>Holy Cross Hospital: toys and gifts, Broad Acres ES</p> <p>Hoover MS: food, gift certificates and household items, Maryvale ES</p> <p>HMS Host Corp: food, toys and gifts, toiletries, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Integrated Document Solutions: toys and gifts, Montgomery Knolls ES and Pine Crest ES</p> <p>Journey's Crossing Christian Church: toys and gifts, Harmony Hills ES and Viers Mills ES</p> <p>Kaiser Permanente of Gaithersburg: toys, gifts and food, Gaithersburg ES and Gaithersburg MS</p> <p>Kiwanis Club of Olney: toys, gifts and time, Kennedy Cluster Schools and Highland ES</p> <p>Kiwanis Club of Wheaton: toys and gifts, Highland ES</p> <p>The Landon School: toys, gifts, coats, Highland ES</p> <p>Lee Middle School Staff: toys and gift certificates, Kennedy Cluster schools</p> <p>Leisure World Lion's Club: food, toys and gifts, Parkland MS</p> <p>Liberty Grove United Methodist Church: food gift cards, coats and gift certificates, Greencastle ES and Banneker MS</p> <p>Marvin Memorial Church: toys and gifts, Pine Crest ES</p>
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Integrated Documents Solutions present holiday gifts to Nancy Jimenez, site coordinator at Pine Crest ES & Montgomery Knolls ES.

The German School: toys and gifts,

Rolling Terrace ES

Georgian Forest ES Staff: toys and

gifts, Kennedy Cluster Schools

Harmony Hills ES Staff: toys and gifts,

Harmony Hills ES and Parkland MS



Thanks to our Donors, Volunteers and Partners Helping with Drives:



<p>MCPS Division of Controller: toys, gifts and time, Silver Spring International MS</p> <p>MCPS Web-team: toys, Rolling Terrace ES</p> <p>Mental Health Association Staff: toys and gifts, Parkland MS</p> <p>Midwest Research: food, gift certificates and household items, Maryvale ES</p> <p>Millian Memorial United Methodist Church: toys and gifts, Parkland MS</p> <p>Mom's Club of Rockville: food, gift certificates and household items, Maryvale ES</p> <p>Montgomery County Commission for Women: toys, gifts and computers, Gaithersburg ES and Gaithersburg MS</p> <p>Montgomery Knolls ES Staff: toys and gifts, Montgomery Knolls ES</p> <p>NIH Advanced Technology: coats, Linkages-wide</p> <p>North Chevy Chase Elementary School PTA: coats, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Our Lady of Visitation School, Germantown: clothes, food, gift certificates and household items, Maryvale ES</p> <p>Pine Crest Elementary School Staff: toys and gifts, Pine Crest ES</p> <p>Research Triangle Institute: toys, Greencastle ES and Banneker MS</p> <p>Richard Montgomery High School: coats, Linkages-wide</p>	<p>Rockville Day Care Association at Brookhaven ES and Sligo Child Development Centers: toys, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Rosemary Hills Elementary School PTA: coats, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Laurie Rowe of Rowe Communications: food, toys and TI-83 calculators, Gaithersburg ES and Gaithersburg MS</p> <p>Sandy Spring Friends Meeting: toys and gifts, Kennedy Cluster Schools</p> <p>Sherwood Associates: toys and gifts at Parkland MS</p> <p>Somerset Elementary School PTA: coats, Linkages-wide</p>	<p>St. Andrew of the Apostle: food and gifts, Harmony Hills ES</p> <p>St. Andrew's Lutheran Church: gifts, Kennedy Cluster schools</p> <p>St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church: food and toys, Harmony Hills ES and Viers Mill ES</p> <p>St. Mark's Orthodox Church: food, gifts and time, Highland ES and Harmony Hills ES</p> <p>Summit Hall ES Staff: toys and gifts, Summit Hall ES</p> <p>Sylvan Learning Center (Gaithersburg): toys, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Temple Beth Ami Havurah: toys, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Temple Micah: Toys, gift certificates and time, Highland ES</p> <p>Travilah Elementary School: coats, Summit Hall ES</p> <p>Tzu Chi Foundation: toys, food and services, Eastern MS and Silver Spring International MS</p> <p>Walt Whitman High School SGA: toys, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Weichert Realtors of Gaithersburg: toys, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Westbrook Elementary School PTA: coats, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Westland Middle School PTA: coats, Linkages-wide</p> <p>Ms. Williams' Students at Parkland Middle School: gifts, Parkland MS</p>
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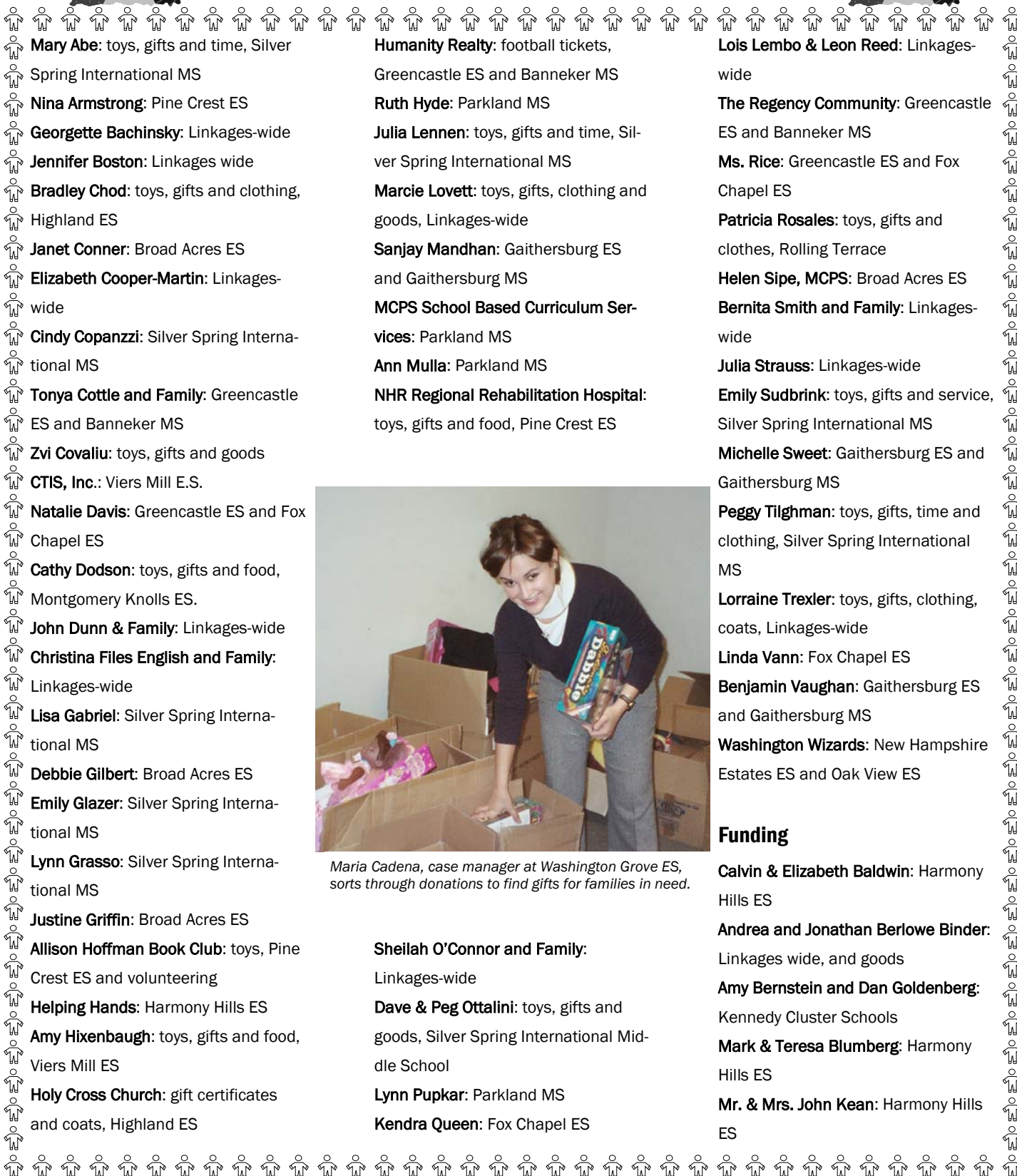
B-CC H.S. PTSA sponsored 100 children from three Silver Spring schools, donating toys and food. L to r: Linkages Marta Contreras (Broad Acres ES), Grace Campbell (New Hampshire Estates ES & Oak View ES) with Desiree Magney, PTSA holiday giving coordinator

Parkland MS Staff: toys, gifts, and goods, Parkland MS

Silver Spring International MS Staff: gifts, Silver Spring International MS



Thanks to our Donors, Volunteers and Partners Sharing Toys, Gifts and Funds:



Mary Abe: toys, gifts and time, Silver

Spring International MS

Nina Armstrong: Pine Crest ES

Georgette Bachinsky: Linkages-wide

Jennifer Boston: Linkages wide

Bradley Chod: toys, gifts and clothing,
Highland ES

Janet Conner: Broad Acres ES

Elizabeth Cooper-Martin: Linkages-
wide

Cindy Copanzz: Silver Spring Interna-
tional MS

Tonya Cottle and Family: Greencastle
ES and Banneker MS

Zvi Covaliu: toys, gifts and goods

CTIS, Inc.: Viers Mill E.S.

Natalie Davis: Greencastle ES and Fox
Chapel ES

Cathy Dodson: toys, gifts and food,
Montgomery Knolls ES.

John Dunn & Family: Linkages-wide

Christina Files English and Family:
Linkages-wide

Lisa Gabriel: Silver Spring Interna-
tional MS

Debbie Gilbert: Broad Acres ES

Emily Glazer: Silver Spring Interna-
tional MS

Lynn Grasso: Silver Spring Interna-
tional MS

Justine Griffin: Broad Acres ES

Allison Hoffman Book Club: toys, Pine
Crest ES and volunteering

Helping Hands: Harmony Hills ES

Amy Hixenbaugh: toys, gifts and food,
Viers Mill ES

Holy Cross Church: gift certificates
and coats, Highland ES

Humanity Realty: football tickets,

Greencastle ES and Banneker MS

Ruth Hyde: Parkland MS

Julia Lennen: toys, gifts and time, Sil-
ver Spring International MS

Marcie Lovett: toys, gifts, clothing and
goods, Linkages-wide

Sanjay Mandhan: Gaithersburg ES
and Gaithersburg MS

**MCPS School Based Curriculum Ser-
vices:** Parkland MS

Ann Mulla: Parkland MS

NHR Regional Rehabilitation Hospital:
toys, gifts and food, Pine Crest ES

Lois Lembo & Leon Reed: Linkages-
wide

The Regency Community: Greencastle
ES and Banneker MS

Ms. Rice: Greencastle ES and Fox
Chapel ES

Patricia Rosales: toys, gifts and
clothes, Rolling Terrace

Helen Sipe, MCPS: Broad Acres ES

Bernita Smith and Family: Linkages-
wide

Julia Strauss: Linkages-wide

Emily Sudbrink: toys, gifts and service,
Silver Spring International MS

Michelle Sweet: Gaithersburg ES and
Gaithersburg MS

Peggy Tilghman: toys, gifts, time and
clothing, Silver Spring International
MS

Lorraine Trexler: toys, gifts, clothing,
coats, Linkages-wide

Linda Vann: Fox Chapel ES

Benjamin Vaughan: Gaithersburg ES
and Gaithersburg MS

Washington Wizards: New Hampshire
Estates ES and Oak View ES

Funding

Calvin & Elizabeth Baldwin: Harmony
Hills ES

Andrea and Jonathan Berlowe Binder:
Linkages wide, and goods

Amy Bernstein and Dan Goldenberg:
Kennedy Cluster Schools

Mark & Teresa Blumberg: Harmony
Hills ES

Mr. & Mrs. John Kean: Harmony Hills
ES



Maria Cadena, case manager at Washington Grove ES, sorts through donations to find gifts for families in need.

Sheilah O'Connor and Family:

Linkages-wide

Dave & Peg Ottalini: toys, gifts and
goods, Silver Spring International Mid-
dle School

Lynn Pupkar: Parkland MS

Kendra Queen: Fox Chapel ES



Thanks to our Donors, Volunteers and Partners Sharing Food, Goods, Services and Other Donations:



Food & Other Donations:

Anonymous: Silver Spring International Middle School

Allen Chapel AME Church: Thanksgiving baskets and funding, Greencastle ES and Banneker MS

American Legion Wheaton Post 268: food and food gift certificates, Viers Mill ES and Parkland MS

Cedar Ridge Community Church: Greencastle ES and Banneker MS

Dave & Busters: Thanksgiving feast, toys and game-cards, Linkages-wide

Interfaith Chapel Church of Leisure

World: Kennedy Cluster Schools

Kiwanis Club of Wheaton: Highland ES

Leadership Cares: Linkages-wide

Lockheed Martin: Linkages-wide

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church of

Leisure World: Kennedy Cluster

Schools

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church:

Kennedy Cluster Schools

Parkland Middle School Staff and

SGA: Parkland MS

Doreen Petit: Broad Acres ES

Silver Spring Church of Christ: food and clothing, Pine Crest ES

St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church:

food gift certificates and funding, Harmony Hills ES

St. Peter's Catholic Church of Olney:

Kennedy Cluster Schools

Temple Beth Ami: food, classroom

materials, Linkages-wide

Judith Vaughan-Prather: Gaithersburg

ES and Gaithersburg MS

Viers Mill Baptist Church: Viers Mill ES

Katie Villani: Broad Acres ES

Wheaton Presbyterian Church: toys and gift certificates, Highland ES



A donated coat brings a smile to Andrea Barrera, site coordinator at Silver Spring International MS

Goods & Other Donations:

Bernadette Aldrich: Rolling Terrace ES

Robin Baron: Linkages-wide

Gordon Brumback: Harmony Hills ES

Linda Bryant: Rolling Terrace ES

Denise Coste: Rolling Terrace ES

Susan & Warren Cutler: Gaithersburg

ES and Gaithersburg MS

Douglas G. Dillard: Rolling Terrace ES

Lee Eglovitch: Linkages-wide

Itala Fontana: Toys, food and goods, Greencastle ES, Banneker MS and Linkages-wide

Laura Fenves: Rolling Terrace ES

Stacy French: Linkages-wide

Karen & Jerry Greenberg: Linkages wide

Adrianne Karamihas: Rolling Terrace ES

Tom Kuhn: Gaithersburg ES and

Gaithersburg MS

Tamara Kukurutz: Rolling Terrace ES

Margarey Joseph: Rolling Terrace ES

Mr. & Mrs. Irv Losman: Viers Mill ES

Steve Magassy: Washington Grove ES

Hector Maysonet: New Hampshire

Estates ES and Oak View ES

June Moore: New Hampshire Estates ES and Oak View ES

Heidi Motz: food, gift certificates and household items, Maryvale ES

Katie Potter: New Hampshire Estates ES and Oak View ES

Karen Rouhani: toys, gifts and clothing, Harmony Hills ES and Viers Mill ES

Natividad Salas: Rolling Terrace ES

Naseema Shafi: Rolling Terrace ES

Rosemary Shapelle: Summit Hall ES

Anita Shapiro: Summit Hall ES

Robin Silbey: Summit Hall ES

Evelyne & Boyd Steward: Gaithersburg ES and Gaithersburg MS

Debbie Szyfer: Rolling Terrace ES

A. Thewatt: Greencastle ES and Banneker MS

Services, Time & Other

Donations

Alex and Suja Ali: Linkages-wide

Olivia Anderson: Rolling Terrace ES

Viviana Azar: New Hampshire Estates ES and Oak View ES

Iilia Bouknight: Rolling Terrace ES

Belen Bryant: New Hampshire Estates ES and Oak View ES

Caron McDaniel: toys and gifts, Parkland MS

Thanks to Donors, Volunteers & Partners, continued from p. 5	Dawn Ortiz: Summit Hall ES
Services or Time	Darnell Roberts: goods and services Rolling Terrace ES
Carlos Mesa: Rolling Terrace ES	Peggy and Jeremy Robbins: New Hampshire Estates ES and Oak View ES
Matthew Downs, Esq: New Hampshire Estates ES and Oak View ES	Silver Spring Ward Young Men and Young Women: Silver Spring International MS
Lisa Gabriel: Silver Spring International MS	Maritza Solano: Rolling Terrace ES
The Grafton School: Linkages-wide	David Stanback: Rolling Terrace ES
Lynn Grasso: Silver Spring International MS	Officer Valentin of D.C. Superior Court: New Hampshire ES and Oak View ES
Officer Luis Hurtado, MCPD: New Hampshire Estates ES and Oak View ES	Elizabeth Vazquez: time and goods, New Hampshire Estates ES and Oak View ES
Lisa Kammerman Photography: Linkages-wide	Victim Assistance & Sexual Assault Program of DHHS: Pine Crest ES
Kendall Kelly-Yahner: New Hampshire Estates ES and Oak View ES	Marceline Vilmar: Pine Crest ES
Desiree and Daniel Magney: New Hampshire Estates ES and Oak View ES	



Linkages Students Go Around the World in Ten Weeks

Senior Girl Scout Jackie McMahon of Potomac was looking for a place to help others as she sought the Scout's Gold Award, the highest award a Girl Scout may earn. After contacting Linkages to Learning, Jackie was directed to Summit Hall ES as a potential setting for her "Around the World in 10 Weeks" after-school project.

Jackie believed the after-school program would help Summit Hall students expand their cultural awareness while providing the schools' diverse families with an opportunity to expose their children to a broad array of enriching extracurricular activities.

Collaborating closely with site coordinator, Ana Lugo Schmitz, Jackie prepared an eight-page proposal identifying community needs, the scope of the program, activities and steps to be included. She noted that "with such a racially and ethnically diverse group, acceptance and knowledge of other cultures is crucial to socially healthy lives for these children."

Schmitz said "Jackie was very responsible, and personally funded the program through her babysitting jobs and cookie sale proceeds. She created flyers and worked with the school and Linkages to Learning to recruit and enroll 32 students. She presented the program like a club, focusing on a different country or culture each week and engaged adults, peers and students from Summit Hall as 'special guests.'

Besides including a wealth of resources from various embassies to increase students' understanding of world cultures, she added delicious snacks representing the country of the week. And Linkages parents were delighted with her creative, hands-on experiences."



In a letter, parent Scarlet Prado stated, "It was a great experience for my daughter. She came home every Wednesday telling me what she had learned about other regions. She talked about dressing up with clothing of other countries, eating various kinds of food, playing fun games and learning other languages. One day, she even came singing a song in Chinese and the next time she came singing a Spanish song."

Prado appreciated the windows to the other cultures provided by the program. "Traveling for us is an unreachable goal at this time in our lives. We do not have money to leave this country. However, through the "Around the World" I feel that my child just came back from a long trip through different countries."

Summit Hall principal Keith Jones believed Jackie served as a great role model for the children. "She even motivated them to do some physical improvements for the school. One of the nicest projects was the cleaning and planting of the school's front entrance and interior courtyard. Beautifying the school has lifted the spirits of our students, children and families alike. I know that when the bulbs come up this spring, the students who participated will feel a special sense of pride," said Jones.

Linkages Welcomes New Staff...

Alis Africano, mental health therapist, Oakview ES and New Hampshire Estates ES
Judy Barragan, mental health therapist, Gaithersburg ES
N'Kenge (Nikki) Feagin, site coordinator, Parkland MS
Gladys Gutierrez, supervisor, GUIDE Program, Inc.
Sarah Hardy, mental health therapist at Eastern MS and Rolling Terrace ES
Joan Gorena, mental health therapist, Highland ES
Allison Stearns, director, Kensington Wheaton Youth Services



Americorps Member Ian Harding instructs parents at Broad Acres ES in using the computer. Ian and David Mendoza, a volunteer from Franciscan Mission Services, each teach up to 12 parents in computer classes.

...and Bids Farewell to Former Colleagues:

Maria Cueto, case manager, Pine Crest ES and Montgomery Knolls ES
David Cueva, mental health therapist, Eastern and Silver Spring International MS
Julie Hochman, director, Kensington Wheaton Youth Services
Olivia Aybar-Torres, case manager, Highland ES



Training Reflections, continued, from p. 1

The importance of developing and maintaining relationships was a theme echoed throughout the day. Linkages staff talked about establishing and maintaining relationships with children and families, with colleagues inside and outside their schools, and with a vast array of community stakeholders as being the essential ingredient to building a successful Linkages program.

Vivian Yao, non-profit provider representative on the Linkages Resource Team, notes, "During the training, our staff identified that the work they do requires tremendous interpersonal skills as well as flexibility as they 'wear many hats.'"

Yao concludes, "Our goal is for our staff to know each other's strengths. We hope they're able to learn from colleagues about successful approaches as well as discuss the challenges they experience. By participating in this exchange of ideas and experiences, our staff gain useful skills and tools to use when working with their schools and parent communities to address their specific needs."



The Perfect Linkages Professional?

Linkages staff worked in teams at its January meeting, brainstorming and creating murals depicting the qualities required of them in their work. Appreciating the importance of individual strengths, there was agreement among staff that although there is no one "perfect" professional, certain characteristics could come in quite handy:

- A generous heart open to all
- Ears to listen without judging
- Extra hands for helping others
- Arms to reach diverse cultures
- Feet planted among grass roots
- Firefighter hat for putting out fires
- A Super-hero cape for dealing with difficult challenges
- The ability to juggle multiple priorities
- A magician's wand
- Extra bags of money
- And of course, a sense of humor!



L: Nikki Feagin, site coordinator at Parkland MS presents with Carol Binta, site coordinator at Maryvale ES. R: Linn Rivera, Linkages therapeutic recreation specialist works with Michelle Shay, clinical supervisor at GUIDE Program, Inc.



Douglas M. Duncan, County Executive
Montgomery County, Maryland

NEW ADDRESS!

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Tel. 240.777.1731

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/Linkages

Alternative formats available upon request

Linkages 3rd Annual Mothers Empowerment Tea: Monday, May 2, 2005



U.S. Congressman Chris Van Hollen
Montgomery County Executive Douglas M. Duncan
and County Council President Tom Perez
Invite you to celebrate at
Linkages to Learning's
3rd Annual Mothers Empowerment Tea
Monday, May 2, 2005, from 3:00 to 5:30 pm
at Rockville's Glenview Mansion

For information about how to support the Tea,
contact Sharon Strauss, 240.777.1449.

Invitations with details to follow!



L to R: Maryvale ES's "Sistah Speaks" group; mom from Montgomery Knolls ES demonstrates Linkages Jewels; mom from Summit Hall ES caters last year's Tea with Through the Kitchen Door colleagues; Highland ES mothers travel the labyrinth at the Rising Phoenix Retreat.